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ABSTRACT

A summary of a conference sponsored by the University of the State of New York to disseminate the results of the 1976-77 follow-up study of the Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction is presented. Representatives from 10 states and various higher education associations were present. The conference focused on the following topics: (1) the methodology used in the study and the value of similar assessment procedures for strengthening new programs; (2) program materials and procedures that have been modified or developed as a direct result of the findings of the study; and (3) mutual problems in developing and implementing the program. The results indicate that a majority of the 170 institutions responding to the survey granted credit for noncollegiate-sponsored instruction based on the recommendations established by individual departments, or on an individual basis. Credit was awarded only when it was appropriate to a student's program of study. The study also indicated that 89 percent of the 1,100 students who requested credit for courses evaluated through the program were awarded credit or advanced standing. Results from a second follow-up study, 1977-78, are also discussed. It is suggested that since New York State is the first and only organization to conduct a comprehensive study of the usefulness of its evaluation and credit recommendation system, the methodologies used and assessment procedures may be of interest to representatives from states planning to conduct similar follow-up studies. Appended are a list of conference participants, a conference agenda, a description of the Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction, and a copy of the report on the 1977-78 follow-up study. (Author/SF)

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A Report to
the
National Institute of Education

Dissemination of the Results of the 1976-77 Follow-Up Study of the Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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Summary of the Report

The Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction of the New York State Board of Regents held a day-and-a-half invitational conference July 19 and 20, 1979 to disseminate nationally the results of the 1976-77 Follow-Up Study on the impact of the Program in New York State. Representatives from ten states which have a similar program were invited to participate. In addition, individuals from higher education associations were present. The conference focused on the following topics: 1) the methodology used in the study and the value of similar assessment procedures for strengthening new programs; 2) program materials and procedures which have been modified or developed as a direct result of the findings of the study; 3) mutual problems in developing and implementing the program. The conference briefly explored the possibility of continuing the sharing of program information among agencies that are evaluating courses for noncollegiate organizations.

I. INTRODUCTION

In September 1977 the National Institute of Education (NIE) received the final report of a study conducted by the Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction of the New York State Board of Regents. The study was conducted with the financial support of NIE and investigated whether the credit recommendations established through the Program for courses offered by noncollegiate organizations were being used. The study also sought to identify student users of the credit recommendations and what effect the recommendations had on them and on the noncollegiate organizations that offered the courses to them.

This study and a second study recently completed in New York State were the primary reasons for a conference sponsored by NIE and the New York State Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction. Representatives from state agencies, higher education institutions, and professional associations (see Appendix A for a list of invitees) from various parts of the country attended the conference on July 19 and 20, 1979 in Denver.

Conference participants had an opportunity to review the Follow-Up Study report before the conference began. The report contained a description of the methodology employed, the major findings of the study and other related findings, recommendations for improving the Program's administration, and implications for other states considering the establishment of a similar program. (See Appendix B for a Summary Report of the 1976-77 Follow-Up Study.)

New York found the results of the study very useful for the continued and improved operation of the program. They used the findings to modify existing procedures and develop new ones to strengthen the evaluation system and to provide more effective services to students, noncollegiate organizations, and colleges. New program materials also resulted from the study.

II. SUMMARY OF THE FOLLOW-UP STUDIES

The conference began with a brief overview of the history of the Program in New York State and an opportunity for participants involved in a similar program to give reports on the background and present status of their state's or organization's evaluation programs. Through these presentations, representatives from states that did not currently have a system for evaluating courses offered by business and industry learned different ways of establishing such a system. Following the introduction to the Program's work, conference participants were provided with a review of the findings of the follow-up studies conducted by New York.

A. 1976-1977 Follow-Up Study

The study answered the following questions about practices in the State during the 1975-1976 academic year:

> Have the credit recommendations been used by colleges and universities in New York State?
>
> Who are the student users of the credit recommendations and what effect have the credit recommendations had on them?

How have the credit recommendations affected noncollegiate organizations?

In order to answer these questions, surveys were sent to all degree-granting institutions in the State (with the exception of those offering only the AOS degree), to the 39 organizations whose courses were evaluated through November 1975, and to a sample of individuals who applied for college credit for evaluated courses.

A majority (68%) of the 170 institutions responding to the college survey reported that they granted credit for noncollegiate sponsored instruction based on the recommendations established by individual departments, or on an individual basis. In all cases, credit was only awarded when it was appropriate to a student's program of study. This represented nearly a 100% increase in the number of colleges granting credit for noncollegiate sponsored courses between 1974, when the Program began, and the Fall of 1976. Colleges that responded to the survey were from all regions of the State, and represented all types of institutions--two-year, four-year, independent and public.

Eighty-nine percent (89%) of the nearly 1,100 students who requested credit for courses evaluated through the Program were awarded credit or advanced standing for them. This finding was based on information collected from 65 institutions that kept track of the credit they had awarded during the 1975-76 academic year.

Sixty-one percent (61%) of the higher education institutions indicated that the publication of the Guide had generated interest in

granting credit for noncollegiate sponsored instruction, and 82% of the institutions found the Guide useful in awarding such credit.

Half of the responding colleges accept noncollegiate sponsored courses appearing in the Guide as if they were directly transferred from accredited colleges and universities.

The student survey indicated that 82% of the nearly 2,000 noncollegiate sponsored courses submitted to colleges received credit. This finding is based on responses from 469 students who sought credit in New York State and out-of-state colleges during the 1976-1977 academic year.

More than 70% of the respondents were enrolled in a college course or degree program at the time they were surveyed and had used the credit colleges granted them for noncollegiate sponsored courses to move more quickly and at less cost toward completing their degrees. One-third of the respondents who were not in college at the time the credit recommendations were established reported that they did enroll because they would receive credit for noncollegiate sponsored instruction. Most of these students had no previous college experience.

In addition to receiving college credit, 35% of the respondents reported that they used the recommended courses to gain job advancements; 8% for salary increments; 6% for professional licensure or certification; and 26% for other purposes (personal development and enjoyment).

More than half of the organizations found that, since their courses had been evaluated, enrollment in the courses which received recommendations has increased and student performance has improved.

Over 50% of the organizations reported that they have developed cooperative arrangements with colleges which include the use of the organization's recommended courses, and the sharing of facilities, staff, and other resources.

More than one-third of the organizations whose courses have been evaluated are revising additional courses to make them eligible for evaluation. More than 70% of the organizations reported using the Program's evaluative criteria in developing new courses.

The results of the study were encouraging to conference participants already conducting a similar program and provided an incentive to those who were considering developing a program. New York State is the first and only organization to conduct such a comprehensive study on the usefulness of its evaluation and credit recommendation system. The methodologies used by New York and the value of its assessment procedures were of interest to representatives from states planning to conduct follow-up studies of their own programs. Participants were especially interested in reviewing a report on the second follow-up study conducted by New York (on its own iniative and as a result of its experience with the first study). The report was provided to participants at the conference (see Appendix C for a copy of the report).

B. 1977-1978 Follow-Up Study

The second follow-up study was a substantially modified version of the first study because of limited staff and financial resources. It was not supported by any outside funding and was conducted as part

of the regular work of the staff. It took place during 1976-77 and focused on only two of the questions asked in the first study.

> Have the credit recommendations been used by adult learners in New York State?
>
> Who are the student users of the credit recommendations and what effect have the credit recommendations had on them?

The number of survey forms which were sent out in the second study was limited, but the same forms, computer programs, and table shells from the first study were used for the second. In limiting the scope of the study, it was decided that the organizations which were surveyed should represent a cross section of organizations and individuals served by the Program. In this way, the findings of the study would have implications and interest for all of the organizations participating in the Program.

The findings of the second study are based on the responses of 314 course participants representing 13 noncollegiate organizations. Of the total number of respondents, less than two percent reported that institutions had not granted them any credit for noncollegiate sponsored courses evaluated through the Program. The study showed other positive benefits of the credit recommendations for adult learners. For example, thirty-seven percent of the respondents reported that their participation in a course which received a credit recommendation motivated them to enroll in a college course or degree program.

The credit recommendations also benefited individuals in other ways. The study showed that 48 percent of the respondents used the recommended courses to gain job advancements; eight percent used them for salary increments; seven percent for professional licensure or certification; and 29 percent for other purposes including part-time employment and personal development.

III. PROGRAM IMPLICATIONS AND PROBLEMS

A major focus of the conference was a review of Program procedures and materials modified or developed as a result of the follow-up studies. New York had planned and designed both studies with the primary objective of implementing changes based on the results. By sharing these modified or new procedures and materials with conference participants, New York gave them an opportunity to discuss the practical advantages of the studies. In so doing, states involved in planning similar studies might use New York's experience to design their studies and ultimately improve their program services.

For example, the first study showed that there was a need for more information about the credit recommendations. At the completion of the study, Program staff implemented several changes to meet this need. First, the staff published a handbook to assist noncollegiate organizations in making the most effective use of the credit recommendations. Second, a college policy booklet was published to provide individual students and organizations with information

about the policies of New York State colleges on accepting the credit recommendations. Finally, it began issuing a newsletter to keep colleges up-to-date on the results of new evaluations.

Findings of the second study were also used by the Program to increase its effectiveness. Because students responding to the second survey asked for increased educational advisement services, the Program requested that a staff person from the Regents External Degree Program, the degree-granting program of the Board of Regents, work directly with organizations whose courses were evaluated for college credit. The staff person visits organizations, explains to the employees how the credit recommendations can be used toward a Regents External Degree, and holds individual advisement sessions. Conference participants learned from the Regents External Degree Program staff person how this special relationship had been developed and was working in New York.

Another example of New York's attempt to respond to the need for educational advisement services is a two-year project supported by a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (HEW) and begun by the Program in September 1978. Staff described to conference participants the progress being made in developing educational advisement services in three different work-related settings. The Program plans to expand its present advisement project which grew out of the first study by making the materials and methods developed through the project available to all participating noncollegiate organizations.

New York's work with CETA training programs is another example of the Program's response to a major finding of both studies that

certain groups of individuals had not been adequately served by the Program. Conference participants heard about the Program's newest efforts to evaluate training programs conducted under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). In working with CETA, New York has increased its efforts to review technical and entry-level courses. Conference participants learned how New York sought separate funding to reach agencies sponsoring CETA training and to meet the needs of disadvantaged, unemployed and underemployed individuals.

After discussing how New York had used the findings of its studies to strengthen the weaker areas in its Program, conference participants acknowledged similar problems in their programs. There was not sufficient time to address each of the problem areas as thoroughly as participants would have liked. States already conducting the program were looking for an opportunity to learn how they might adapt, for their own use, the steps New York had taken. States not yet involved in the program were concerned about ways to handle future problems they might encounter.

The main problems shared by conference participants focused on financial support for the conduct of the program. The severe budgetary problems in most states make it unlikely that the program will receive state appropriations. The revenues generated by the course evaluations and various program publications do not come close to offsetting the fixed costs of operating the program. Various methods of marketing the program and experiences with an annual fee system were briefly discussed. The findings of the Follow-Up studies

have given New York direction for dealing with these problems, but, clearly, financial support for the program needs to be discussed at a future meeting.

IV. CONCLUSION

The conference made it apparent that the Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction in New York is more fully developed than in other states. This is partly true because some of the factors were present in New York State when the Program began there which were not present in other states. For example, when the Program began, the academic climate for it was favorable in New York. There were a number of institutions or college programs specifically designed to serve adult, part-time students, such as the Regents External Degree Program. Another reason for New York's success is that staff is working full-time on this implementation of the Program, without any other regular responsibilities. This is essential because the task of contacting noncollegiate organizations, explaining the evaluation process, and conducting evaluations is very time-consuming. Also, the additional services developed by New York are the result of staff submitting proposals to fund specific projects to provide those services. The Program's Advisement Project and its work with CETA training programs are two such examples.

The conference provided an opportunity for individuals involved in conducting the program to share experiences and exchange ideas for improving the program's services. It was beneficial to participants

interested in beginning a similar program to learn more about the practical difficulties involved in conducting the program's work so that they could plan for how they might be handled. Representatives from higher education institutions and agencies most actively interested in the Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction received first-hand knowledge of the follow-up study and of the operational details of New York's program. In this way, the conference served the purpose of increasing the acceptance of the policy of granting academic credit for noncollegiate sponsored courses to help adult students in receiving recognition for learning gained in these courses. And, it provided a focus for an on-going discussion about how the program should be supported and developed.

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PROGRAM ON NONCOLLEGIATE SPONSORED INSTRUCTION
NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Report of 1976--77 Follow-Up Study

APPENDIX B

The Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction is conducted in New York State and other northeastern states by the New York State Education Department. The Program reviews formal educational programs and courses sponsored by noncollegiate organizations and makes appropriate credit recommendations for the courses evaluated. These organizations include business and industry, labor unions, government agencies, and other organizations whose primary function is not education. The credit recommendations guide colleges and universities as they consider awarding credit to persons who have successfully completed noncollegiate sponsored courses. In this way students are assisted in receiving academic recognition for the learning gained in the courses.

Since the Program began in New York State in January 1974, it has evaluated 932 courses conducted by 70 organizations. The course descriptions and credit recommendations resulting from these evaluations are regularly published in *A Guide to Educational Programs in Noncollegiate Organizations*. The credit recommendations are established by teams of evaluators selected from college and university faculties and noncollegiate organizations. The evaluations involve site visits, a thorough review of all course materials, and discussions with the staff conducting the programs being reviewed. Other agencies conducting the Program in other parts of the country are the American Council on Education, the Consortium of the California State University and Colleges, and the Pennsylvania State Education Department.

In the latter part of 1976 the Program in New York began a one-year follow-up study to answer the following questions about practices in the State during the 1975-76 academic year:

> Have the credit recommendations been used by colleges and universities in New York State?
>
> Who are the student users of the credit recommendations and what effect have the credit recommendations had on them?
>
> How have the credit recommendations affected noncollegiate organizations?
>
> //

In order to answer these questions, surveys were sent to all degree-granting institutions in the State (with the exception of those offering only the AOS degree); to the 39 organizations whose courses were evaluated through November 1975; and to a sample of individuals who applied for college credit for evaluated courses.

Colleges and Universities in New York State

A majority (68%) of the 170 institutions responding to the college survey reported that they are granting credit for noncollegiate sponsored instruction based on the recommendations established through the Program. They may award credit on the basis of a collegewide policy, on the basis of policies established by individual departments, or on an individual basis. In all cases, credit is only awarded when it is appropriate to a student's program of study. This represents nearly a 100% increase in the number of colleges granting credit for noncollegiate sponsored courses since the Program began in 1974. Colleges responding to the survey are from all regions of the State, and represent all types of institutions--two-year, four-year, independent and public.

Eighty-nine percent (89%) of the nearly 1,100 students who requested credit for courses evaluated through the Program were awarded credit or advanced standing for them. This finding is based on information collected from 65 institutions that kept track of the credit they had awarded during the 1975-76 academic year.

Sixty-one percent (61%) of the institutions indicated that the publication of the Guide had generated interest in granting credit for noncollegiate sponsored instruction, and 82% of the institutions found the Guide useful in awarding such credit.

Half of the responding colleges accept noncollegiate sponsored courses appearing in the Guide as if they were directly transferred from accredited colleges and universities.

The follow-up study resulted in the publication of a booklet entitled *Granting Credit for Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction in New York State*. The booklet lists the 228 institutions surveyed and includes the policy of each responding institution for using the credit recommendations, other specific information about each institution's practices, and the source of additional information. The booklet is available through the Office on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction.

Students

The student survey indicated that 82% of the nearly 2,000 noncollegiate sponsored courses submitted to colleges received credit. This finding is based on responses from 469 students who sought credit in New York State and out-of-state colleges in the 1975-76 academic year.

More than 70% of the respondents were enrolled in a college course or degree program at the time they were surveyed and had used the credit colleges granted them for noncollegiate sponsored courses to move more quickly and at less cost toward completing their degrees. One-third of the respondents who were not in college at the time the credit recommendations were established reported that they did enroll because they would receive credit for noncollegiate sponsored instruction. Most of these students had no previous college experience.

In addition to receiving college credit, 35% of the respondents reported that they used the recommended courses to gain job advancements; 8% for salary increments; 6% for professional licensure or certification; and 26% for other purposes (personal development and enjoyment).

Noncollegiate Organizations

More than half of the organizations found that, since their courses had been evaluated, enrollment in the courses which received recommendations has increased and student performance has improved.

Over 50% of the organizations reported that they have developed cooperative arrangements with colleges which include the use of the organization's recommended courses, and the sharing of facilities, staff, and other resources.

More than one-third of the organizations whose courses have been evaluated are revising additional courses to make them eligible for evaluation. More than 70% of the organizations reported using the Program's evaluative criteria in developing new courses.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAM IS AVAILABLE FROM:

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REPORT ON THE 1977-78 FOLLOW-UP STUDY IN NEW YORK STATE

Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction

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I. INTRODUCTION

At the completion of the 1976-77 follow-up study, staff decided that the operation of the Program would benefit from the continued collection of data. As a result, a second follow-up study was started to primarily focus on two important questions, which were also asked in the first study.

1. Have the credit recommendations been used by adult learners in New York State?

2. Who are the student users of the credit recommendations and what effect have the credit recommendations had on them?

The second follow-up study was a substantially modified version of the first study in other ways, because of limited staff and financial resources. It was necessary to make it part of the regular work of the office. The number of survey forms which were sent out was limited, but the same forms, computer programs, and table shells from the first study were used for the second. In limiting the scope of the study, it was decided that the organizations which were surveyed should represent a cross-section of organizations and individuals served by the Program. In this way, the findings of the study would have implications and interest for all of the organizations participating in the Program.

II. METHODS OF THE SECOND STUDY

Beginning in Fall 1977 the Program asked a group of 13 participating organizations to keep a list of the names and addresses of persons who requested that transcripts be sent to colleges, the names of the colleges, and the titles of the courses for which credit was being requested. The organizations which agreed to participate are:

American Institute of Barking--New York City Chapter
American Telephone & Telegraph Company
Central Labor Rehabilitation Council of New York, AFL-CIO
Chautauqua Institution
Consolidated Edison Company of New York

General Electric Company
Grumman Aerospace Corporation
Hotel Industry Training Program
Life Office Management Association
Nassau County Police Department
New York Telephone Company
Port Authority of New York and New Jersey
Seaman's Church Institute of New York

The second study was designed to collect information directly from course participants because it was discovered during the first study that most of the noncollegiate organizations had not been able to collect information about the ways their employees or members used the credit recommendations. This was because many did not have adequate staff to handle the paperwork or because colleges did not respond to their request for information.

In September 1977, a letter was sent to each of the 13 cooperating organizations outlining their responsibilities. Each organization then identified a liaison person who would keep the lists. The appointment of a specific liaison in each organization was crucial to the success of the study because it made data collection more efficient and less time consuming for the Program staff.

Another benefit of this arrangement was that the liaison persons became knowledgeable about the Program and the uses of the credit recommendations. They could advise course participants in their organization about how to gain college credit for evaluated courses, they could supply colleges with additional information about the courses and the Program's evaluation and credit recommendation system, and they could quickly alert Program staff about specific problems an individual was encountering in getting a credit recommendation accepted.

In January, May, and September 1978, letters were sent to each of the organization liaison persons to remind them to submit their student lists. Following receipt of these lists, survey forms were sent to all of the students and the results were tabulated in June and December 1978.

A total of 783 surveys were sent out during the year. Three hundred and fourteen (314) persons returned questionnaries which were complete enough to serve as the basis for the study's conclusions. This is a very high rate of return for a study of this type and a statistically significant sample.

The questionnaire sent to students collected demographic data; it also asked students to list the noncollegiate sponsored courses they submitted for college credit, the colleges where they submitted the courses, and the action taken by each college. In addition, students were asked to indicate other ways they had used the credit recommendations and the effects the credit recommendations had had on motivating them to enroll in college. Finally, many students wrote in suggestions on the survey forms for improving the Program's services and described specific problems they had encountered as they sought credit for noncollegiate sponsored courses.

III. MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study are based on the responses of 314 course participants. The findings are grouped in this section of the report in terms of how they answer the two central questions posed by the study. Additional information which was collected is summarized in Section IV of this report.

1. Have the credit recommendations been used?

Credit Awarded—The study shows that adult learners are using the credit recommendations to earn college credit for noncollegiate sponsored courses. Of the total number of respondents, 232 or 74 percent who applied for credit during the 1977-78 academic year for courses evaluated through the Program received credit. An additional 25 percent of the 314 students reported that they were still waiting to hear from colleges on their requests for credit. Less than 2 percent of the respondents reported that institutions had not granted them any credit for their noncollegiate sponsored courses.

2. Who are the student users of the credit recommendations and what effect have the credit recommendations had on them?

Student Characteristics—The majority (67 percent) of the respondents were male; 83 percent of the respondents were between the ages of 21 and 40; and 52 percent held professional/technical or managerial jobs.

More than 80 percent of the respondents reported that they were enrolled in a college course (10 percent) or degree program (72 percent) at the time they were surveyed and had used the credit colleges granted them for noncollegiate sponsored courses to move more quickly and at less cost toward their degrees.

A significant characteristic of the group using the credit recommendations is that the great majority of them (82 percent) were already pursuing college study. This is in line with the findings of the first study and, again, may reflect the practice of many colleges and universities of granting credit only after a student has enrolled. It may also be that students who are taking courses are most inclined to seek additional credit and, for that matter, to fill out a survey that requests educational information.

Differences Between Male and Female Respondents—There were clear differences in reported characteristics of men and women using the credit recommendations. A higher percentage of women than men were under the age of 21 (13 percent of the women and 3 percent of the men) and fewer women were over the age of 31 (39 percent of the women and 60 percent of the men).

There were significant differences in reported occupations for men and women. Twenty-eight percent of the men classified themselves as professional/technical in contrast to 18 percent of the women. Six percent of the men identified their occupations as clerical compared to 25 percent of the women. In general, men reported higher-salaried occupational titles.

Women had less postsecondary educational experience than men. Nineteen percent of the women had more than a high school diploma compared to 51 percent of the men.

In summary, women respondents were younger, with lower-salaried occupational titles, and less educational experience.

Effects of the Credit Recommendations—The Program is motivating adults to return to school, especially older adults who have not had previous college work.

Thirty-seven percent of the respondents reported that their participation in a course which received a credit recommendation motivated them to enroll in a college course or degree program. The percent movitated to enroll increased

with age, from approximately 10 percent of the respondents under 30 years of age to 25 percent of those over 40. The largest group motivated to enroll in a college course or degree program were those who indicated that their highest educational level was a high school diploma.

The credit recommendations also benefitted individuals in other ways. Employees of a county government agency that sponsored courses recommended for college credit were able to use the recommendations to earn up to 5 points on civil service examinations. Another organization that conducted training programs primarily for teachers found that the local school board would grant salary increments to the teachers based on successful completion of the recommended courses. Finally, individuals reported being promoted within their organizations because of completion of the courses. This was particularly true in the engineering field and in clerical fields.

The study showed that 48 percent of the respondents used the recommended courses to gain job advancements; 8 percent used them for salary increments; 7 percent for professional licensure or certification; and 29 percent for other purposes including part-time employment and personal development.

IV. RELATED FINDINGS

In addition to answering the two questions asked on the survey form, the study helped the Program determine if the make-up of the group it was serving was changing. This was important to know in order for the Program to plan improved or more expanded advisement services. Consequently, the characteristics of the respondents to the first study are compared with those of the second study in this section of the report.

Finally, students submitted suggestions for the improvement of the Program's services and reported on their specific problems in using the credit recommendations. Although this latter information was in narrative form, the responses followed certain patterns and proved to be a valuable source of information to Program staff in advising other students on the uses of the credit recommendations. Key patterns in the responses are described here to show the experiences of these users of the credit recommendations.

Characteristics of Respondents--The first study was broader in scope and reported on students from a larger selection of noncollegiate organizations. However, with respect to student characteristics, its findings can be readily compared with the findings of the second study.

The students responding to the second study were younger than those who responded to the first study (47 percent under 30 years of age compared to 38 percent in the first study). Respondents to the second study were more often in sales/marketing and clerical work titles and less often in professional/technical titles than respondents to the first study. Almost twice as many respondents to the second study reported that their highest level of education was a high school diploma.

Seventy-two percent of the respondents to the second study were currently enrolled in degree programs. This is a substantial increase over the first study (58 percent of those respondents were enrolled in degree programs). Respondents to the second study were making increased use of the credit recommendations for earning job advancements (48 percent compared to 35 percent in the first study).

In three areas the responses from both studies were very similar. First, as noted above, 37 percent of the respondents to the second study reported that they were motivated to enroll in a degree program or college course because of their participation in a course which received a credit recommendation. This figure compares closely to the 35 percent finding in the first study. Second, 34 percent of the respondents to the second study compared to 29 percent of the respondents to the first study reported that they had received educational counseling at their organization. Finally, 63 percent of the respondents to the second study compared to 64 percent of the respondents to the first study reported that they had received educational counseling from their college.

In summary, according to the findings of the second study, the Program has begun to serve a younger group, in lower-paying job titles, and with less educational experience. This group is more likely to be enrolled in degree programs and more likely to be using the credit recommendations for other purposes, especially job advancements. And although the Program is continuing to motivate individuals to enroll in college courses because of the credit they can earn for

noncollegiate sponsored instruction, most individuals served by the Program are still not receiving educational counseling at their work site.

Student Comments--More than one-half of the students who returned survey forms submitted suggestions for the improvement of the Program's services and described in narrative form a variety of problems they encountered in their search for credit for noncollegiate sponsored courses. The problems fell into three general categories and are summarized in this section of the report.

A. Inadequate Information About the Credit Recommendations

Probably the most basic difficulty students had in seeking credit for noncollegiate sponsored courses was the lack of adequate information about what the credit recommendations meant and how they could be used. Many students reported that their organizations had never even told them that the courses they were taking were recommended for credit. This meant that some of the students who could have earned more credit from colleges for noncollegiate sponsored courses weren't able to do so because they already had repeated some of the courses at the college.

Other students knew about the credit recommendations but were unable to find the right person at the college where they were enrolled to help them get credit for the courses. The organization sponsoring the courses had not provided them with enough information about how to use the credit recommendations, and colleges did not clearly provide such information in their catalogs. Students became frustrated trying to explain to colleges what the credit recommendations were. Students' expectations were often unrealistic because organizations had not given them an accurate picture of how the credit recommendations could be used. Many students were angry when colleges told them that they were not aware of the Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction or that the noncollegiate sponsored course they took did not match up exactly with the college course and, therefore, would not be granted any credit.

B. Transcript Services

Many students had serious difficulties in receiving credit for noncollegiate sponsored courses because the transcripts that their organizations issued lacked information that the college needed. (It is important to note that only a small number of organiations issued inaccurate or incomplete transcripts. In most cases, organizations followed the Program's suggestions for how to issue a transcript and had no difficulty with colleges.) However, a few organizations left out the dates the student had taken the courses, thereby making it impossible for the college to check the transcript against the dates in the course exhibits listed in the Program's publication, A Guide to Educational Programs in Noncollegiate Organizations. In other cases, these organizations did not use the Guide's course title and, again, colleges were unable to determine whether the courses had been reviewed and recommended for credit. Difficulty with the organization's transcript services extended the time it took students to receive credit and increased the student's responsibilities to meet with college and organizational staff to help them communicate with one another. This often meant that students had to take days off from work or make many costly long-distance telephone calls. It also increased their frustration and many of them gave up trying because of a lack of time and money to devote to the effort.

C. Educational Advisement Services

Related to the problems students encountered trying to help colleges and organizations communicate more effectively over transcripts was a need for general educational advisement services. Students repeatedly expressed a need for information not only about the credit recommendations but also about a whole range of available educational and career options for adult learners. Neither the organizations where they worked nor the colleges where they were enrolled, or were interested in enrolling, provided them with such information. They wanted to know about external degree programs, special programs for adults, credit-by-examination programs, and credit for life experience. While many of them were motivated enough to try to find the needed information on their own, frustration and

the amount of time involved in the search clearly discouraged most of them from reaching their goals.

In summary, the study revealed to the Program that students need additional help in three areas: they need more information about what the credit recommendations mean; they need an accurate and efficient method of informing colleges that they have completed noncollegiate sponsored courses; and, they need to know more about what their options are for continuing their education.

V. PROGRAM IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The primary objective of the second study was to find out if the credit recommendations were being used. The findings of the study show that the recommendations established through the Program are being used. The Program is effectively helping adult learners earn credit for noncollegiate sponsored instruction. However, the study also points to areas where the Program needs to make changes in its methods of operation in order to be more effective. This concluding section summarizes the steps the Program is taking to modify its services to better respond to adult learners, noncollegiate organizations, and colleges.

More Information About the Credit Recommendations--The results of the study show that individuals completing noncollegiate sponsored courses still do not fully understand what the credit recommendations mean or how they can be used. Most of the respondents to the study were able to receive some credit for the recommended courses as a result of their persistance and determination. However, almost all of them encountered difficulty along the way.

The Program has recognized that individuals need help in understanding the credit recommendations. It has supplied materials to participating noncollegiate organizations explaining how the recommendations can be used, in particular, a Handbook on how to use the credit recommendations. However, these publications have not been used as intended by organizations and their course participants. Apparently the organizations need the Program staff to meet directly with them to plan how to publicize the recommendations within the context of each organizational setting. This kind of personal approach is necessary and yet has not been possible in most instances because of a limited number of staff persons

available to provide this service. One step to partially remedy this situation is to focus the Program's regularly scheduled regional conferences on ways to better promote the recommendations within each organization. These meetings will include discussions about the uses of the credit recommendations and the Program's publications as well as how to establish cooperative relationships with colleges. These group meetings will take less staff time and can begin almost immediately.

The Program does recognize that additional staff is needed to provide the organizations with more personal assistance. It intends to seek sources of funding to meet these needs in the near future. Proposals to work with specialized groups of organizations such as cultural institutions have already been prepared. It is hoped that an expansion of the Program's services will benefit all of its organizations.

Improved Educational Advisement Services--As a result of the study, the Program hopes to extend the educational advisement project which it runs under a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (HEW). At present the project is developing models of educational advisement services at three work sites. The materials and procedures developed in this project will eventually be made available to other participating noncollegiate organizations.

Finally, the need identified in the study for additional information about degree programs especially designed for adult learners led to the Program's request for a staff person from the Regents External Degree Program to work directly with participating organizations. This staff person will explain to an organization's employees how the credit recommendations established for the organization's courses can be used toward earning a Regents External Degree. In addition, the staff person will describe other options for earning credit such as proficiency exams, experiential learning, and formal military service courses. In this way, employees of organizations whose courses have been evaluated for college credit will have direct contact with someone who could provide on-site educational counseling.

Special Services to Colleges--The study points to a new direction the Program might take in developing its role in helping the adult learner. If additional staff were available, the Program could provide a consultant service to colleges

and universities to help them develop policies for granting credit for noncollegiate sponsored instruction and initiate cooperative relationships with business and industry. In addition, it could provide assistance to colleges on how to serve the adult learner. It has been the Program's experience that colleges would find these services useful. This will be even truer in the coming years as enrollments continue to decline.

Collecting Information About Uses of the Credit Recommendations—The two studies conducted by the Program thus far have been helpful in measuring the Program's impact and in assessing its need for changes. The second study was useful despite its limited scope because it provided needed information about the Program's effectiveness. It built upon the information collected in the first study and kept staff aware of the persistent problems involved in the operation of such a Program. It will continue to be important in the future for the Program to collect similar data in order to know if, and how, the credit recommendations are being used, weaknesses in the operation of the Program, and ways to improve its services to adult learners.

Conference to Disseminate Results of the 1976-77 Follow-Up Study of the Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction in New York State

July 19-20, 1979
Regency-Denver Hotel

Sponsored By:

The New York Program on
Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction

AGENDA

Thursday, July 19	
3:00 — 5:30 p.m.	Introduction and Program Overview
6:00 — 7:00 p.m.	Reception
7:00 p.m.	Dinner
Friday, July 20	
9:00 a.m. — Noon	Workshop Sessions
	I. Methodology of the Follow-Up Studies
(Break for coffee and danish at 10:00 a.m.)	II. Changes in the Program resulting from the 1976-77 Follow-Up Study
	III. Program advisement services
Noon	Lunch
1:30 — 4:00 p.m.	Blood, Sweat and Tears: persistent concerns in establishing and operating a program on noncollegiate sponsored instruction